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THE

GROWTH OF LAFAYETTE

A POST-PRANDIAL ADDRESS

BY

PROF. FRANCIS A. MARCH, LL.D., H.D.

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Professor of the English Language and Comparative Philology
in Lafayette College.

Delivered at the Annual Meeting and Banquet of the
Philadelphia Alumni Association

 of Lafayette College,

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FRANCIS A. MARCH, LL.D., L.H.D.,

PROFESSOR OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPARATIVE PHILOLOGY
IN LAFAYETTE COLLEGE.

There are no dreams of youth which every college student
retain to dream than visions of the growth and great-
ness of alma mater. And there are no college graduates
more ready to cherish these dreams than the old
Lafayette.

That shall be the subject of my talk to-night, "the
Lafayette," or, to put it in more imposing form and
test fashionable phrase,—“the development of a
college.”

Lafayette boys do not believe in developments and
that develop or evolve themselves—that go it blind.
An intelligence to start with. A wise and good power
for the development of the world; for the develop-
ment of college, a wise and good heart and head; for the
development of Lafayette, Dr. Cattell.

It is in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred
and three that the Reverend William Cassiday Cattell

became president of Lafayette. His face was bright with a thousand hopes, but the most significant effluence of the new power was the waking of the whole college to new religious life,—God's blessing breathed upon old Lafayette,—Christ's stamp, to boot, upon the new president.

Troops of friends gathered round him, Mr. Pardee and Mr. Adamson in the van. No other college has, or ever has had, such a Board of Trustees. Students thronged in. The college developed.

In the first place, the courses of study were multiplied and differentiated.

The old college curriculum was intended for students who were expecting to be ministers, lawyers or doctors. Work enough for four years before coming of age had been agreed upon by educators as the best preparation for professional study. Some of it is of practical use to professional men. The mathematics are needed by the lawyer to sum up his bills of costs, and by the preacher to see how he can make his salary go round, after he has paid his life insurance, and his interest at the bank, and his share of the million of dollars endowment of his church. The languages are necessary tools in original research. Doctors use the natural sciences. Others of the studies are good for mental discipline. All had come to be conventional accomplishments without which no one could pass current among scholars.

Lafayette was strongest in the studies for ministers. It had been established for pious students who could not encounter the costs and the temptations of the great cities and colleges. The first president, Dr. George Junkin, was a great man, a man of genius. He attracted other men of genius. Has any other

college without endowment ever had among the professors associated with its first president such a roll of eminences as Samuel D. Gross, James M. Porter, Traill Green, Charles F. McCay, Washington McCartney, James C. Moffatt, William Henry Green, James H. Coffin, Isidor Loewenthal?

This type of teacher had been propagated. The college never had been common place. But in the period preceding 1863 half of the graduates studied for the ministry.

A new class of students now presented themselves, students intending to be miners, civil engineers, mechanics, chemists. Here are new learned professions. They grow rapidly in importance and dignity, and their most eminent members are more and more earnestly advising aspiring young men to take a course of liberal learning in addition to the courses of a professional school. New courses have been arranged at Lafayette to meet the wants of these new professions. They contain modern languages, especially English, natural sciences, technical studies, political economy, and history,—the keys and tools of modern man. This is our development by multiplication. It gives rise to a four-fold multiplication of courses to meet the demands of four kinds of learned professions.

A later duplication of this kind is just now demanded, mainly by teachers and scientists who have already graduated, but who seek for eminent positions, professorships in colleges or the like, and find it of use to take post-graduate courses for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. These students now number nearly as many as our senior undergraduates.

Many of our sister colleges have developed courses for women. I do not know that any woman has ever made appli-

cation for admission to the undergraduate courses of Lafayette. I have often wondered why. We have hosts of bright girls in Easton and thereabouts who carry off the honors in our high schools, and who afterwards combine into Chatauqua circles and literature classes. It may be they are afraid of Dr. Knox, now; but they could not have been afraid of Dr. Cattell.

Differentiation, to use a technicality of the evolutionists, gives rise to elective studies. When there are plenty of professors such studies are natural. There are often several different authors equally suited to the capacity of a class, but one having one kind of interest, another another kind. If there are half a dozen teachers of Greek, it is a pleasant arrangement that each give a course in a different author. Then a student who is thinking of studying law and likes legal oratory, can go into Demosthenes, a preacher of the same college class into Chrysostom, a doctor into Aristotle, a literary man into Æschylus, if he is for tragedy, or Aristophanes, if for fun; or at certain grades a choice may be given between different kinds of study of similar difficulty, as between organic analysis and analytical geometry, between Blackstone and bridge building, or Hebrew and Homer, or Beowulf and Goethe.

In these ways the old Lafayette course of 2070 recitations and lectures has developed into 9263.

The electives at the other old colleges, at Harvard even, are for the most part like those at Lafayette, developments of the old college course. Innocent persons think from the newspaper talk, that they can go to Harvard and do what they please; walk into the laboratories and handle all the gases and blow up the buildings the first day, or into Professor Goodwin's Greek and Professor Child's Beowulf at their pleasure. But

they would find that in order to take this study they must first have taken that; and before that, the other. There is a progressive system and they must begin at the beginning. It is a development of the old four-years course.

There is, I am told, a development of the old field school in some of our newer American universities. They undertake to get together a body of permanent instructors in every thing, to whom anybody can go, and hear somebody lecture on anything he pleases.

I dare say the friends of Lafayette would not very strenuously object to the establishment of well-endowed professorships there of minute or remote branches of learning, of thorough bass, for example, or Japanese; but a distinction should be made between a college and a university proper. The college work is the education of youth. Provision for professorial assistance to men in the labors of their middle life must be mainly relegated to government universities. A Bureau of references to heads of workshops of the right sort might be better even there than a permanent salaried body of professors in waiting.

The attempt to provide a great number of elective studies for college youth, not as parts of useful courses, but to please the fancy of the idle, or kindle the fires of incipient genius has not been necessary at Lafayette. The great mass of our youth are still pressing on hard to active life. Ninety-nine in the hundred are in haste to begin the work of some profession, and go to college to be fitted for it. This determines what is best for them to study. Our engineers do not gambol about in protoplasm or Sanskrit. Our chemists do not spend their days and nights in Hebrew or quaternions. Shall our ministers

that-are-to-be study Latin and Greek? That is not an open question for them. They must study them. They cannot get a license to preach without them. So must our lawyers study Latin or they cannot gain admittance to the bar.

There are, to be sure, a few persons now in our country who do not intend to practice any profession, or mingle with professional men, who mean to lead a life of luxury and pleasure, who abhor Latin, Greek and mathematics, but who fancy certain semi-intellectual occupations, some descriptive science perhaps, Shakespeare and the musical glasses, or athletics, and so prefer to hang about a college during their minority.

I very seriously recognize that it is most desirable that youth of this class should have the best influences of college life. Perhaps it is desirable that some modification of college rigor should be made for them. But that is rather for a university to make. Their numbers are small. I believe Harvard alone might provide for all this class of matriculates, and that there is no call whatever for the old colleges to attempt this sort of equipment, except the call which fashion makes.

With the development of our courses of study there was a corresponding development of our diploma. The student of law or medicine or theology wants a diploma to secure him his registration which shows that he has studied Latin and Greek. So does the teacher who applies for a class in classics in the High School. The teacher of science, on the other hand, wants a diploma which shows that he has studied the sciences; the engineer one that shows he has studied engineering. Harvard, which boasts its many courses, still gives but a single degree.

That seems to be a case of arrested development. The Harvard graduate who wishes to enter as a law student in our courts, or to enter the graduate courses at Lafayette has to bring a set of papers supplementary to his diploma, or try to pass the Lafayette examinations. To be sure, if a graduate is going to do nothing in particular, it may suit him to pose with a degree that declares him to be nothing in particular.

At the same time with this development of the courses of study there has been a development of the methods of teaching. The early college had little apparatus of illustration or manipulation, and its work was mostly a gymnastic of the intellect.

The traditional picture of the student represents him in dressing gown and slippers, recumbent, his book fastened open before him, and needing nothing to help him study but the hydraulic pressure on the brain which he gets from his legs high propt on chair or table, desk or mantel.

But all study now is accompanied by exercises of practice or research. Munificent friends of learning and Lafayette have bestowed their hundreds of thousands of dollars in buildings and equipment for it. Our student of to-day would be best caricatured blowing himself up in the chemical laboratory, or caught in the wheels of machines, or making furtive sketches in the drawing-rooms, or upsetting a theodolite, or lugging arm-loads of books of reference.

All the best colleges use these methods in the study of the material sciences. A similar principle has been freely used at Lafayette in the linguistic and philosophic and historical studies. In these it has been common in our universities to give up the old text book study for lectures by the home professors. It is thought best to have every morsel of truth

lubricated well with professorial palaver. At Lafayette study of a good elementary text book has been retained, and inculcated; but it has been accompanied by continual exercises of original research. The students are made to write their own lectures, we say.

Suitable specific topics for research suggested by the text book are given out every week and every student is required to hand in every week a written discourse embodying the results of his research for the week. A number of these papers are read in class and the whole topic is handled in a general discussion.

This is a capital college training of American growth similar in principle to the German *Seminarium* work, which is just now being introduced into our most advanced universities.

In connection with it a handling of our libraries has grown up which is perhaps worth mentioning. The works of general reference, cyclopædias, dictionaries and the like, and also the works of special reference upon each of these topics of research are collected and left in open cases for free use by all the students in the Reading-room, and to be taken out at night by such students as are making researches in them. The actual use of these books is ten times what it would be if each book had to be drawn from the librarians. They are often in conditions to shock our model librarians, volumes out of place, bottom up, battered and all that, and worn out, many of them, every year. But what are books made for, Mr. Librarian? The main reading of the college is of these books, and of the periodical literature which is kept under the same regulations.

Novel reading has not much developed, Scott's novels are read more than all the rest together. And Miss Austen's

Pride and Prejudice keeps from year to year in front of all books but reference books.

Our athletics must also be counted in our development. A professor of Physical Culture was elected in 1865, one of Dr. Cattell's earliest professors, as the new gymnasium was one of his latest endowments. Regular exercises in class are required of all the students, the same as in literary and scientific studies, and athletics are a most important addition to the old college training.

Whether it is due to the bracing air of Easton, or Presbyterian back-bone, our college teams take the lead among those of undergraduate collegians. And we have little of the unfortunate effects most deplored in our largest universities. None of our students give themselves up to athletics; we cannot get our champions to practice enough. Nor do we have professional trainers. Foot ball was rather unsatisfactory two or three years ago. Our big brothers took to disabling the players rather than carrying the ball to the goal, and told us that it was the first principle of foot ball to throw away all thought of being gentlemanlike; and the city mobs began to jeer at games in which bloody noses and cracked crowns were not current. But the new rules with two good referees have changed all that, and we have never had better exhibitions of manly strength, endurance, and skill, and of knightly spirit upon our campus than the last year's games with Haverford, Swarthmore and Lehigh.

With all these added cultures of mind and body there has been a notable mellowing of social habits. There are handsomer rooms, more costly board. The college fraternities have grown in strength, and with their old memories and far-reaching associations are able to develop a more genial manhood.

I am not sure but we make college too good a place. Two persons may pass through the very same series of circumstances, and one find it all happiness and the other all misery. One begins a millionaire and keeps losing and losing till he reaches poverty. The other begins with poverty and works up to his million rejoicing all the way. An early life of hardness, a setting yourself at zero in youth has its advantages. I fear sometimes that our preachers may find their college life with its morning naps for beauty sleep, its studies as they please, its daily use of costly athletic equipments, its baths, its banquets, its music, its friendships, its spacious halls full of light and tempered air, an untimely life as a prelude to a struggle with sin and bad air, poverty, deacons and church choirs.

At Lafayette we are pretty nearly right; we are still for plain living and high thinking. When it comes to students having thousand-dollar rooms, and body servants, and horses, real horses to ride to recitation, and dogs, and canes all round, that is going too far.

An eminent professor of one of our greatest western universities, returning from a visit to a private mansion on the grounds of another university, described it to me as a palace of stone carved in figures and full inside of statuary, paintings, and what not. And he exploded with indignation that such an ideal of private life should be set before the unsophisticated American youth of the university. I was surprised at first by his heat; but I plainly see that the professors' houses at Lafayette are far better suited to their salaries. When we have a professor who is disposed to spend a million in building, and has the million, I most sincerely hope that he will put it in a public building like that of Mr. Pardee. I should

be sorry to know that any of our students' rooms were so splendidly upholstered and garnished, that strangers were taken to them as a more imposing sight than our public buildings. It is very undesirable that the habits of social life at a college should be so expensive that a professor cannot live on his salary. That makes it necessary to seek oftenest for professors, either rich men's sons, or husbands of rich men's daughters, or elderly gentlemen who have accumulated wealth. These are very desirable ornaments of any institution, but better suit, I think, the great American universities than hard working colleges like Lafayette.

We see that all these developments of college studies, college manual training, athletics, social life, are in the direction of freedom, of more powerful personality, a richer individual character, a higher life.

The central source from which these movements flow is religion, more of that divine life which is the life of that vine into whom the true man is grafted. Lafayette was founded in prayer, and has been kept alive in prayer. It always has been a religious college. But there has been of late years an immense increase of religious life. It does not resemble at all the revivals of fifty years ago. It is not a revival of revivals, but a revival of religion. There is little of the old law work. Confession of sin gives place to profession of faith and love. Our youths seem easily to attain a consciousness of the divine life in them, and this not for enjoyment as with the mystics, but for action. They make a business of religion. They organize, equip themselves for service, and go out working in every direction. They are ready to go to the ends of the earth.

These feelings are common to all the old religious colleges, and yet we find a falling off in the number of college prayers, and other religious services of the whole institution.

"Dr. Luther," said his wife, "why is it that we pray less frequently now than we used to under the Pope?"

If I knew Luther's answer, perhaps I could explain the decline in college prayers.

No doubt many of our earnest Sauls, who are to be Pauls, are aware that their own prayers are more eloquent than those of the college authorities. But in some quarters loud objection is made to compulsory religion.

Compulsory attendance on prayers and preaching is a special object of attack. But it is almost a misnomer to call the college discipline compulsion. It is nothing like so strong as the obligations of professional life, or the tyranny of fashion, or social habits, or home influence. A college student is about the freest man there is. The compulsion to prayers, what is it? If a student is absent twenty times without excuse, word is sent to his father. But if he were at home and absent from home prayers his father would know it the first morning. When Adonis visits at the home of Edith, does the sweet compulsion to family prayers make the gracious words of the Bible less dear to him?

Much of the talk against college prayers is a survival from old times when they really had painful accompaniments. We used to get up at Amherst in winter while it was black night, struggle through the snow waist deep sometimes, and hear prayers in a chapel without fire with the thermometer twenty degrees below zero, more or less, and then have a Greek recitation by the light of little oil lamps, before we went to breakfast, before sun rise.

At Lafayette it used to be the custom to hold these early prayers without any following recitation, so that the students who had tumbled up and taken prayers, for the most part tumbled into bed again.

But we have changed all that. It is certainly a pleasant sight to see our college now, bathed and breakfasted and ready for recitations, gathering at morning prayers. Our beautiful hill bright in the early sun, the valley lying in rosy mist with the rivers glinting through, the quiet mountains looking on as though they liked the looks, the white smokes curling upward from hearths of homes that may be temples, the spired fingers of the churches pointing heavenward, the college campus with its hundred paths all leading to the college chapel, the hundreds of young men rejoicing in their strength, and rejoicing in the morning and in the nature around them which is in itself a liberal education, and gathering to offer a morning tribute of thanks and praise to the giver of all good, and ask him for stout hearts and clear heads for the labors of the day, and for the scholar's blessing, the pure heart that shall see God,—is a sight worth seeing. It is impossible to believe that it can be a burden to any.

I have seen many generations of college students grow up and pass through life. I have known hundreds of them well, and I am fully satisfied that the habit of attendance on religious exercises in college has been a most powerful influence for good.

I believe in it still. I trust it still. When I meet a Lafayette man, whether in the pulpit, or at the bar, a doctor, a teacher, a journalist, an engineer, I hope to find him a leader among men, I hope to find that he wears still some grace won

from the humanities, the fair humanities of Greece and Rome and the golden days of Queen Elizabeth. But I expect, I trust, that I shall find him to be a better man for going regularly to prayers and church.

And that, after all, is the proper work of a college, to make Christian men of sound culture. It is not so much to develop genius; genius in the teens is either omniverous or stupid, and either way considers professors a bore; nor is it to make incipient professors write up huge note books of statistics and bibliography. It is to prepare our youth to discharge the duties of good citizens in those professions requiring special preparation, to make good preachers, lawyers, doctors, chemists, teachers, journalists, engineers, farmers, merchants, master workmen in every good work, heads of every good organization in Church and State.

In this great career so auspiciously begun by Dr. Junkin and carried forward by Dr. Cattell, all friends of Christian education may rejoice with us that under Dr. Knox, clear sighted, upright and downright, and devout, and true hearted, Lafayette still marches on.

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